

CHAPTER 3

THE SANCTITY OF BLOOD AND HUMAN DIGNITY

3.1 THE INVIOLABILITY OF A BELIEVER EXCEEDS THAT OF THE KA'BA

There are some people who declare that the majority of the Muslims are disbelievers, polytheists and innovators on account of political, ideological or religious differences, and subsequently massacre them ruthlessly. They must know the sanctity and honour of a believer's life in the sight of God and His Messenger ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ declared the honour and dignity of a believer greater than that of the Ka'ba, the Sacred House of God. Imam Ibn Mājah transmitted a hadith on this subject.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَطُوفُ بِالْكَعْبَةِ، وَيَقُولُ: مَا أَطْيَبُكَ وَأَطْيَبَ رِيحِكَ! مَا أَعْظَمَكَ وَأَعْظَمَ حُرْمَتَكَ! وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ مُحَمَّدٍ بِيَدِهِ، حُرْمَةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ أَعْظَمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ حُرْمَةً مِنْكَ، مَالِهِ، وَدَمِهِ، وَأَنْ نَظُنَّ بِهِ إِلَّا خَيْرًا.

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا said, “Once, I saw the Messenger of God ﷺ circumambulating the Ka’ba and he was addressing it: ‘How excellent you are and how sweet your smell is! How grand you are and how grand your sacredness is! By the One in Whose Hand is Muhammad’s soul, the inviolability of a believer’s property and blood is greater in the sight of God than your sacredness. We must think only well of a believer.’”¹

¹ Set forth by •Ibn Mājah in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-ḥitan* [The Book of Tribulations], chapter: “The Inviolability of a Believer’s Blood and Property”, 2:1297 §3932. •al-Ṭabarānī in *Musnad al-Shāmiyyīn*, 2:396 §1568. •al-Mundhirī in *al-Targhīb wa al-tarhīb*, 3:201 §3679.

3.2 KILLING A HUMAN IS A GRAVE SIN LIKE DISBELIEF

Imam Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, one of the Imams of *Ahl al-Sunna* in theology, interpreted the verse:

﴿مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾

﴿Whoever kills a person [unjustly], except as a punishment for murder or [as a prescribed punishment for spreading] disorder in the land, it is as if he killed all of humanity﴾¹

declaring that murder can be an act of disbelief. He wrote:

مَنْ اسْتَحَلَّ قَتْلَ نَفْسٍ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ قَتْلَهَا بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ، فَكَأَنَّمَا اسْتَحَلَّ قَتْلَ النَّاسِ جَمِيعًا، لِأَنَّهُ يَكْفُرُ بِاسْتِحْلَالِهِ قَتْلَ نَفْسٍ مُحَرَّمٍ قَتْلُهَا، فَكَانَ كَاسْتِحْلَالِ قَتْلِ النَّاسِ جَمِيعًا، لِأَنَّ مَنْ كَفَرَ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَصِيرُ كَافِرًا بِالْكُلِّ
وَيَحْتَمِلُ الْآيَةُ وَجْهًا آخَرَ، وَهُوَ مَا قِيلَ: إِنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ مِثْلًا أَنَّهُ لَوْ قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا. وَوَجْهٌ آخَرُ: أَنَّهُ يَلْزَمُ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا دَفْعُ ذَلِكَ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ وَمَعُونَتُهُ لَهُ، فَإِذَا قَتَلَهَا أَوْ سَعَى عَلَيْهَا بِالْفَسَادِ، فَكَأَنَّمَا سَعَى بِذَلِكَ عَلَى النَّاسِ كَافَّةً. . . . وَهَذَا يَدُلُّ أَنَّ الْآيَةَ نَزَلَتْ بِالْحُكْمِ فِي أَهْلِ الْكُفْرِ وَأَهْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ جَمِيعًا، إِذَا سَعَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ بِالْفَسَادِ.

Whoever declares lawful the killing of a person whose killing has been forbidden by God (except when there is a valid reason), it is as if he considers it lawful to kill all of humanity. This is because he disbelieves by his declaring lawful the killing of one whose killing is unlawful. This is akin to declaring lawful the killing of all of humanity, because the one who disbelieves in one verse from God's Book disbelieves in the whole of it. . . .

¹ Qur'ān 5:32.

This verse contains another possible angle of interpretation, and it is as has been said: His murder of one person entails the same burden [in the Hereafter] as if he killed all of humanity. Another possible angle of interpretation is that it is necessary for everyone to make a collective effort to help and save the peaceful person from murder. So, when the murderer kills that harmless soul or attempts to harm it, it is as if he is attempting to do that to everyone. . . . This indicates that the verse was revealed as a ruling for the people of disbelief and the people of Islam together, if they sow corruption in the earth.¹

In his *al-Lubāb fī 'ulūm al-Kitāb*, Abū Ḥaṣṣ al-Ḥanbalī interpreted the Qur'ānic verse, "it is as if he killed all of humanity",² and declared that the murder of one individual is comparable to the killing of all of humanity, and he quoted the sayings of different imams in support of this position.

قَالَ مُجَاهِدٌ: مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا مُحَرَّمَةً يَصِلُ النَّارَ بِقَتْلِهَا، كَمَا يَصْلَاهَا لَوْ قَتَلَ
النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا. وَقَالَ قَتَادَةُ: أَعْظَمَ اللَّهُ أَجْرَهَا وَعَظَمَ وَزْرَهَا، مَعْنَاهُ: مَنْ
اسْتَحْلَلَ قَتْلَ مُسْلِمٍ بغيرِ حَقِّهِ، فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا. وَقَالَ الْحَسَنُ:
﴿فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا﴾، يَعْنِي: أَنَّهُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْقِصَاصِ
بِقَتْلِهَا، مِثْلَ الَّذِي يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ لَوْ قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا.

قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خَلْفٍ
أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ. إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَفُورٌ

¹ Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, *Ta'wīlāt Ahl al-Sunna*, 3:501.

² Qur'ān 5:32.

رَجِيمٌ»

وَقَوْلُهُ: «يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ»، أَي: يُحَارِبُونَ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ، كَذَا قَدَرَهُ الْجُمْهُورُ.
وَقَالَ الرَّخْشَرِيُّ: يُحَارِبُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَحَارَبَتُهُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي حُكْمِ
مُحَارَبَتِهِ. نَزَلَتْ هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ فِي قُطَاعِ الطَّرِيقِ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ. (وَهَذَا قَوْلُ)
أَكْثَرِ الْفُقَهَاءِ.

أَنَّ قَوْلَهُ تَعَالَى: «الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا»
يَتَنَاوَلُ كُلَّ مَنْ يُوصَفُ بِهِ، سَوَاءً كَانَ مُسْلِمًا أَوْ كَافِرًا، وَلَا يُقَالُ: الْآيَةُ
نَزَلَتْ فِي الْكُفَّارِ، لِأَنَّ الْعِبْرَةَ بِعُمُومِ اللَّفْظِ لَا بِخُصُوصِ السَّبَبِ، فَإِنْ
قِيلَ: الْمُحَارِبُونَ هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَجْتَمِعُونَ وَهُمْ مَنَعَةٌ، وَيَقْصِدُونَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ
فِي أَرْوَاحِهِمْ وَدِمَائِهِمْ، وَاتَّفَقُوا عَلَى أَنَّ هَذِهِ الصِّفَةَ إِذَا حُصِلَتْ فِي
الصَّحَرَاءِ كَانُوا قُطَاعَ الطَّرِيقِ، وَأَمَّا إِنْ حُصِلَتْ فِي الْأَمْصَارِ، فَقَالَ
الْأَوْزَاعِيُّ وَمَالِكٌ وَاللَيْثُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ وَالشَّافِعِيُّ: هُمْ أَيْضًا قُطَاعُ الطَّرِيقِ،
هَذَا الْحَدُّ عَلَيْهِمْ، قَالُوا: وَإِنَّهُمْ فِي الْمُدُنِ يَكُونُونَ أَعْظَمَ ذَنْبًا فَلَا أَقْلَ مِنْ
الْمُسَاوَاةِ، وَاحْتَجُّوا بِالْآيَةِ وَعُمُومِهَا، وَلِأَنَّ هَذَا حَدٌّ فَلَا يَخْتَلِفُ كَسَائِرِ
الْحُدُودِ.

Mujāhid said, "If someone kills a soul unjustly, he will go to Hell due to that murder, just as he would have gone to Hell if he killed entire humanity." Qatāda said, 'God has made the reward for saving it [a life] tremendous and made the burden of sin [for taking a life unjustly] tremendous too. This means that whoever declares it lawful for himself to kill a Muslim, it is as if he killed all humanity'. Interpreting the same verse, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said, "This means that he is liable to legal retribution [*qisās*] for killing it [the sinless soul] as would be the person who killed all of humanity."

God says: *¶Indeed, those who wage war against God and His Messenger and remain engaged in creating mischief in the land [i.e., perpetrate terrorism, robbery and burglary amongst people], their punishment is that they should be slain, or crucified, or their hands and their feet on opposite sides should be cut off, or that they should be exiled from the land. That is for them a humiliation in this world, and for them there is a terrible torment in the Hereafter—except those who turn to God in repentance before you overpower them. So, know that God is Most Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.¶*¹ The phrase in the verse, “*yuhāribūn Allāh*” (*wage war against God*), implies that they wage war against the friends of God. That is the interpretation maintained by the overwhelming majority of scholars. Al-Zamakhsharī said, “They wage war against the Messenger of God, and waging war against the Muslims takes the same ruling as waging war against him.” This verse was revealed about the brigands [highway robbers: *qutṭāʿ al-ṭarīq*] amongst the Muslims, and [this position is held] by most of the jurists.² Indeed, God’s statement, *¶Those who wage war against God and His Messenger and remain engaged in creating mischief in the land¶*, includes everyone who possesses these traits, whether he is a Muslim or a disbeliever. One cannot object or claim that the verse was revealed regarding the disbelievers, because the point of consideration is the generality of its expression, not the particular circumstance in which it was revealed.³ If it is said that those who wage war [*muḥāribūn*] are those who join forces and who possess power and target the Muslims in their lives and wealth, and that they [the scholars] agree that if these traits are found amongst people of the desert wastelands—then they are brigands. And if these traits are adopted by a group residing in cities, al-Awzāʿī, Mālik, Layth b. Sa’d

¹ Ibid., 5:33–34.

² usayn al-Baghawī, *Maʿālim al-Tanzīl*, 2:33; and al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*, 11:196.

³ This is a maxim of Qurʾānic hermeneutics. Ed.

and al-Shāfiʿī all agree that they, too, are considered brigands and that the same prescribed punishment is to be applied against them. They stated that when their crimes take place in populated areas the sin is severer. They inferred this from the aforementioned verse and the generality of its expression, and because it is a prescribed punishment, it is therefore no different from the other prescribed punishments.¹

The humiliating punishment of a murderer who intentionally kills a believer can be understood from the verse wherein God mentioned the punishment of Hell for these sinners with phrases such as 'abide for ages', 'His wrath', 'curse him' and 'dreadful torment'. God says,

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا﴾

﴿But he who kills a Muslim deliberately, his recompense will be Hell, wherein will he abide for ages. God will afflict him with His wrath and will curse him. And He has prepared for him a dreadful torment.﴾²

3.3 MURDER OF A HUMAN IS THE GREATEST WRONG LIKE POLYTHEISM

Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH) interpreted the verse,

﴿وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا﴾

﴿But he who kills a Muslim deliberately﴾,³

declaring intentional murder a major sin that it is so severe and grave that God has mentioned it in conjunction with the greatest wrong—that of *shirk*, or idolatry. He writes:

¹ Abū Ḥafṣ al-Ḥanbalī, *al-Lubāb fī ʿulūm al-Kitāb*, 7:301.

² Qurʾān 4:93.

³ Qurʾān 4:93.

هَذَا تَهْدِيدٌ شَدِيدٌ وَوَعِيدٌ أَكِيدٌ لِمَنْ تَعَاطَى هَذَا الذَّنْبَ الْعَظِيمَ، الَّذِي هُوَ مَقْرُونٌ بِالشَّرْكَ بِاللَّهِ فِي غَيْرِ مَا آيَةٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، حَيْثُ يَقُولُ سُبْحَانَهُ فِي سُورَةِ الْفُرْقَانِ: ﴿وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَدْعُونَ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ وَلَا يَقْتُلُونَ النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا يَزْنُونَ﴾ وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: ﴿قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي عَلَيْكُمْ أَلَّا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا﴾ إِلَى أَنْ قَالَ: ﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ﴾.

This is a stern warning and emphatic Divine threat to those who perpetrate this grievous sin that is connected—in more than one verse in God's Book—with the taking of partners in worship along with God. The Most High says in *Sūra al-Furqān*, *And [the believers are] those who do not worship any other god besides God, or kill a soul unlawfully—except with just cause—or commit adultery.*¹ And God says, *Say [O Prophet], "Come, I will recite to you those things which your Lord has forbidden to you: Do not set up anything as a partner with Him; treat your parents with excellence and do not kill your children owing to poverty. We alone give you sustenance and [will provide for] them as well. And do not draw near to shameful deeds, be they open or hidden. And do not kill the soul whose [killing] God has forbidden, except when it is justified [legally]. These are the injunctions He has enjoined upon you so that you may apply reason".* ﴿[Qur'ān 6:151]²

As he was delivering his Last Sermon on the evening of the Hajj, the Prophet ﷺ made clear the unlawfulness of killing and pointed out its inherent evil. He said,

إِنَّ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَأَمْوَالَكُمْ وَأَعْرَاضَكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَرَامٌ، كَحُرْمَةِ يَوْمِكُمْ هَٰذَا، فِي

¹ Ibid., 25:68.

² Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm*, 1:535.

شَهْرِكُمْ هَذَا فِي بَلَدِكُمْ هَذَا، إِلَى يَوْمٍ تَلْقَوْنَ رَبَّكُمْ. أَلَا، هَلْ بَلَّغْتُ؟ قَالُوا: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ اشْهَدْ، فَلْيُبَلِّغِ الشَّاهِدُ الْغَائِبَ، قَرَّبَ مُبَلِّغٍ أَوْعَى مِنْ سَامِعٍ، فَلَا تَرْجِعُوا بَعْدِي كُفَّارًا يَضْرِبُ بَعْضُكُمْ رِقَابَ بَعْضٍ.

‘Indeed your blood and your property are inviolable, like the inviolability of this day of yours and this month of yours and this land of yours, until the day you meet your Lord. Listen, have I conveyed the message?’ The Companions replied, ‘Yes’. He said, ‘O God! Bear witness. Let the one present inform those who are absent, for perhaps the one to whom it is conveyed will retain it better than he who hears it [directly]. Do not revert as disbelievers after me, striking each other’s necks’.¹

The Messenger of God ﷺ has clearly given the judgement in this agreed upon hadith that those who shed blood, engage in violence and acts of terrorism, raise arms and kill Muslims are no longer Muslims; they are disbelievers. The Messenger of God ﷺ has removed all doubts about this, using the words, ‘Do not revert as disbelievers after me, striking each other’s necks’. This is a clear declaration that those who commit terrorism and mass murder are disbelievers.

Abū Sa‘īd al-Khudrī and Abū Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said regarding the murder of a believer,

لَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلَ الْأَرْضِ اشْتَرَوْا فِي دَمِ مُؤْمِنٍ لَأَكْبَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي النَّارِ.

‘Even if all the inhabitants of the heavens and the earth gathered together to shed the blood of a single believer, God

¹ Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Shāḥīḥ: Kitāb al-Hajj* [The Book of Pilgrimage], 2:620 §1654, and *Kitāb al-‘ilm* [The Book of Knowledge], chapter: “The Saying of the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Many a Person to Whom Something is Conveyed Retains it Better than the One Who Heard It’”, 1:37 §67. •Muslim in *al-Shāḥīḥ*, 3:1305–1306 §1679.

would cast them all into the Hellfire'.¹

3.4 BLOODSHED IS THE GREATEST OF ALL CRIMES

Mass murder, bloodshed, and unjust killing are such grave offences that God Most High will take those who commit them to task before anything else on the Day of Resurrection. 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said while describing the enormity of shedding blood unlawfully,

أَوَّلُ مَا يُقْضَى بَيْنَ النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي الدِّمَاءِ.

'The first issue that will be judged between people on the Day of Resurrection is that of blood [i.e., murder]'.²

'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar رضي الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ warned about the disastrous consequences of fighting and bloodshed and said,

إِنَّ مِنْ وَرَطَاتِ الْأُمُورِ الَّتِي لَا مَخْرَجَ لِمَنْ أَوْفَعَ نَفْسَهُ فِيهَا سَفْكُ الدِّمِ
الْحَرَامِ بِغَيْرِ حِلِّهِ.

'Of the serious matters from which no one who brings it upon himself and falls into it will escape is that of blood that was shed unlawfully'.³

Abū Hurayra رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of God ﷺ said,

يَتَقَارَبُ الزَّمَانُ، وَيَنْقُصُ الْعِلْمُ، وَيُلْقَى الشُّحُّ، وَتَظْهَرُ الْفِتَنُ، وَيَكْثُرُ

¹ Set forth by •al-Tirmidhī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-diyāt* [The Book of Blood Money], chapter: "The Legal Ruling Concerning Blood", 4:17 §1398. •al-Rabī' in *al-Musnad*, 1:292 §757. •al-Daylamī in *Musnad al-firdaws*, 3:361 §5089.

² Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-diyāt* [The Book of Blood Money], chapter: "Whoever Kills a Believer Intentionally", 6:2517 §6471. •Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 3:1304 §1678. •Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 1:442. •al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb taḥrīm al-dam* [The Book on the Prohibition of Bloodshed], chapter: "The Sanctity of Blood", 7:83 §3994.

³ Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-diyāt* [The Book of Blood Money], chapter: "Whoever Kills a Believer Intentionally", 6:2517 §6470. •al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:21 §15637.

الْهَرَجُ. قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَيُّهَا هُوَ؟ قَالَ: الْقَتْلُ، الْقَتْلُ.

‘Time will seem to get shorter and knowledge will diminish. Miserliness will surface and tribulations will rise and *haraj* will abound’. The Companions asked, ‘O Messenger of God, what is *haraj*?’ He said, ‘It is killing. It is killing’.¹

When peaceful civilians are targets of terrorism, tyranny and barbarism, and are victimized due to doctrinal and ideological differences between the political and religious personalities, the logical consequence is anarchy, chaos, lawlessness and strife. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه said,

كُنَّا فُعُودًا عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَذَكَرَ الْفِتْنَ، فَأَكْثَرَ فِي ذِكْرِهَا حَتَّى ذَكَرَ
فِتْنَةَ الْأَحْلَاسِ. فَقَالَ قَائِلٌ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ! وَمَا فِتْنَةُ الْأَحْلَاسِ؟ قَالَ: هِيَ
هَرَبٌ وَحَرْبٌ.

‘We were once sitting with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when he described the tribulations. He described them at length, until he mentioned the tribulation of *al-ahlās*. At that point, someone asked, “O Messenger of Allah! What is the tribulation of *al-ahlās*?” The Prophet ﷺ said, “It is chaos and mass killing”.’²

3.5 KILLING A MUSLIM IS A GREATER SIN THAN DESTROYING THE WORLD

How can wrongdoers who brutally kill peaceful citizens to realize

¹ Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-fitan* [The Book of Tribulation], chapter: “The Emergence of Tribulations”, 6:2590 §6652. •Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-fitan wa ash-rāʾ al-sāʿa* [The Book of Tribulations and the Portents of the Final Hour], chapter: “When Two Muslims Confront Each Other with Their Swords”, 4:2215.

² Set forth by •Abū Dāwūd in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-fitan wa al-malāḥim* [The Book of Tribulations and Battles], chapter: “Mention of Tribulations”, 4:94 §4242.

their vicious objectives claim to be the stalwarts of peace and security? They are engaged in the wanton killing of thousands of non-combatant Muslims through their terrorist activities; however, the Prophet ﷺ declared that killing a Muslim is a greater sin than destroying the whole world.

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Amr ر. reported that the Messenger of God ﷺ said,

لَزَوَالِ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنُ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ قَتْلِ رَجُلٍ مُسْلِمٍ.

‘Certainly, the passing away of the entire world is less in the sight of God than the murder of a single Muslim’.¹

‘Abd Allāh b. Burayda ر. reported from his father that the Messenger of God ﷺ said,

قَتْلُ الْمُؤْمِنِ أَعْظَمُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ زَوَالِ الدُّنْيَا.

‘Killing a believer is a more serious matter in the sight of God than the destruction of the entire world’.²

Another report says the killing of a man, without legal authority, is a tragedy more serious than the passing away of the entire world. Al-Barā’ b. ‘Azib ر. reported that the Messenger of God ﷺ said,

لَزَوَالِ الدُّنْيَا جَمِيعًا أَهْوَنُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ سَفْكِ دَمٍ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ.

‘Certainly, in the estimation of God, the passing away of the whole world is lighter than unjustly shedding the blood of a

¹ Set forth by •al-Tirmidhī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-diyāt* [The Book of Blood Money], chapter: “What Has Come to Us Concerning the Gravity of Killing a Believer”, 4:16 §1395. •al-Nasā’ī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb taḥrīm al-dam* [The Book on the Prohibition of Bloodshed], chapter: “The Sanctity of Blood”, 7:82 §3987. •Ibn Mājah in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-diyāt* [The Book of Blood Money], chapter: “The Gravity of Killing a Muslim Unjustly”, 2:874 §2619.

² Set forth by •al-Nasā’ī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb taḥrīm al-dam* [The Book on the Prohibition of Bloodshed], chapter: “The Sanctity of Blood”, 7:82–83 §3988–3990. •al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam al-ṣaghīr*, 1:355 §594. •al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:22 §15647. al-Ṭabarānī declared this tradition authentic [*ḥasan*].

human being'.¹

3.6 THE VENERATION OF THE DEAD IS IMPERATIVE IN ISLAM

While Islam has ordained the observance of human dignity and the protection of human life, property and honour without any discrimination of faith, colour, race and region, it has also enjoined with equal emphasis on the veneration of the dead. Whether Muslim or non-Muslim, a human body deserves veneration even after death. Some self-styled and secular people are vocal against Islam, although they have neither awareness about the teachings of Islam nor have they studied Islam in detail. They target Islam due to their ignorance. In reality, whatever is happening in Pakistan and some other Muslim lands to justify terrorism and extremism contravenes Islam. The political leadership of these countries is responsible for the current situation, which is keeping people from the right direction and leaving them strayed and uninhibited. Islam does not only hold human life in high esteem during one's lifetime; it declares it an obligation to pay due honour to the dead as well—an obvious evidence that Islam is absolutely a religion of peace and mercy.

According to Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh رضي الله عنه,

مَرَّتْ بَنَا جِنَازَةٌ فَقَامَ لَهَا النَّبِيُّ ﷺ وَقُمْنَا لَهُ، فَقُلْنَا: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّمَا جِنَازَةٌ يَهُودِيٌّ. قَالَ: إِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْجِنَازَةَ، فَقُومُوا.

“Once, a funeral procession passed by us and the Prophet ﷺ stood up for it (revering the dead), so we stood up with him. We then remarked, ‘O Messenger of Allah! That was the funeral of a Jew [so why did you stand up]?’ He replied, ‘When you see a funeral procession, you should stand up.’”²

¹ Set forth by •Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *al-Ahwāl*, p. 190 §183. •Ibn Abī 'Āsim in *al-Diyāt*, p. 2 §2. •al-Bayhaqī in *Shu'ab al-Imān*, 4:345 §5344.

² Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Janā'iz* [Funerals], Ch.: Someone standing up for a Jewish funeral procession, 1:441 §1249. •Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Janā'iz* [Funerals], Ch.: Standing up for a funeral procession, 2:660 §960. •Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 3:319 §14467. •al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan*, *al-*

According to another hadith report related by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Layla,

كَانَ سَهْلُ بْنُ حَنِيفٍ وَقَيْسُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ قَاعِدَيْنِ بِالْقَادِسِيَّةِ، فَمَرُّوا عَلَيْهِمَا
بِجِنَازَةٍ، فَقَامَا، فَقِيلَ لَهُمَا: إِنَّهَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ أَيِّ مِنْ أَهْلِ الدِّمَةِ،
فَقَالَا: إِنَّ النَّبِيَّ ﷺ مَرَّتْ بِهِ جِنَازَةٌ، فَقَامَ، فَقِيلَ لَهُ: إِنَّهَا جِنَازَةٌ يَهُودِيٍّ،
فَقَالَ: أَلَيْسَتْ نَفْسًا؟

“Sahl b. unayf and Qays b. Sa‘d were sitting in al-Qadisiyya when a funeral procession passed by them and they stood up for it. They were told, ‘It is for one of the people of the land,’ i.e. one of the *dhimmīs*. They narrated, ‘A funeral procession passed by the Prophet ﷺ and he stood up. He was told that it was the funeral procession of a Jew and he said, ‘Is it not a (human) soul?’”¹

The exalted Messenger of Allah has enjoined the veneration of a human being in every condition and under all circumstances without any discrimination of religion, colour, race and culture. It should be kept in mind that here we are talking about the veneration of a deceased human being. Alas! Yet we are unable to raise a society to respect and honour living humans.

3.7 THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN GRAVES IS INDISPENSABLE

If you take Islam as a paragon of love, peace and compassion, then you will discern all its dimensions illumined with lights of love and non-violence. Islamic teachings enjoin us to revere the sanctity of graves as well. It is not allowed to either sit or stand on graves. Body and bones

Janā’iz [Funerals], Ch.: Standing up for the funerals of polytheists, 4:45 §1922.

¹ Set forth by •al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Janā’iz* [Funerals], Ch.: Someone standing up for a Jewish funeral procession, 1:441 §1250. •Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, *al-Janā’iz* [Funerals], Ch.: Standing up for a funeral procession, 2:661 §961. •Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 6:6 §23893. •al-Nasā’ī in *al-Sunan*, *al-Janā’iz* [Funerals], Ch.: Standing up for the funerals of polytheists, 4:45 §1921.

may decay and decompose with the passage of time; however, being a grave, a burial place of a human being, it has to be venerated.

To ensure the sanctity of graves, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ enjoined his Community to remove his shoes in the graveyard. Bashir b. Khasasiyya has narrated:

كُنْتُ أَمْشِي مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، فَمَرَّ عَلَى قُبُورِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَقَالَ: لَقَدْ سَبَقَ هَؤُلَاءِ شَرًّا كَثِيرًا. ثُمَّ مَرَّ عَلَى قُبُورِ الْمُشْرِكِينَ فَقَالَ: لَقَدْ سَبَقَ هَؤُلَاءِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا. فَحَانَتْ مِنْهُ الْتِفَاتُهُ فَرَأَى رَجُلًا يَمْشِي بَيْنَ الْقُبُورِ فِي نَعْلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ: يَا صَاحِبَ السَّبْتَيْنِ! أَلْقِهُمَا.

“I was accompanying Allah’s Messenger when we passed by a Muslims’ graveyard. He said: ‘Indeed these people have been saved from a big evil.’ Then, passing by a graveyard of polytheists, he said: ‘These people have been deprived of a great benefit.’ He then stepped ahead. When he saw a man passing through the graves with shoes on, he said: ‘O man in shoes, remove your shoes!’”

Another hadith has reported these words:

يَا صَاحِبَ السَّبْتَيْنِ! وَيْحَكَ أَلْقِ سَبْتَيْكَ.

“O man wearing shoes! It is a pity! Remove your shoes!”

When the man saw and recognized Allah’s Messenger, he removed his shoes and threw them away.¹

These Prophetic traditions amply prove that Islam has accorded equal honour to human beings in their lifetime as well as after death and burial in the graves. The scholars and the interpreters of hadith have established the veracity and veneration of funerals and the sanctity of human graves as indispensable.

¹ Ibn Majah, Nisai, Hakim, al-Mustadrak